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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, GATHERED
AT NEW-DURHAM, N. H. 1780.

(Continued.)

In my former Number, I gave my readers a short account of this people from the year 1780, to the year 1786, in the month of September.

In the year 1786, on the Second day of December, they assembled at Gorham, in quarterly meeting; and after hearing refreshing reports, from the several branches, and attending to such business as they found needful to be done, in order that they might keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace, &c. they examined Samuel Thombs, of Gorham, and ordained him to the office of a ruling Elder; Andrew Cobb, and George Hamlin, of the same town, to the office of Deacons. Thombs was a man of an excellent spirit; and was such an Elder as the Apostle said should be counted worthy of double honour, i. e. he ruled well and laboured in the word and doctrine. 1. He ruled his own spirit well, and was therefore mightier than he that taketh a city. 2. He ruled his own house well, having his children in subjection, with all gravity, and therefore knew how to take care of the church, over which the Holy Ghost made him an overseer.

This man bore a threefold testimony. 1. A word testimony. 2. A living testimony. 3. A Dying testimony. 1. His words were as goads and as nails, fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given by one shepherd. In doctrine he was uncorrupt, his ideas were clear, his arguments pointed and pungent. He generally trembled when he spake and I believe there were but a few who heard him with candour, but either trembled or rejoiced. As to his living testimony, I believe he generally practised himself what he preached to others. He died triumphantly, and left the world a memorable evidence of the efficacy of the religion of Jesus Christ. By his words he convinced many; by his life many more; and by his death a number were so alarmed, and convinced of the necessity of having that religion which is pure and undefiled, that they never rested, till they found rest in Christ.

Cobb continued in the office of a Deacon, and has ever been a very useful brother in the public cause of God. He has spared no pains to attend meetings; and no cost to support them: his heart and hand has ever appeared to go together in the glorious work of the Lord. He has used the office well; and has thereby purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. He is yet living and rejoicing in hope of the Glory of God.

Hamlin, continued in the office of Deacon, a while; but in a time of trials, being under some embarrassments in his own mind, he withdrew

from this church, and joined the people called Quakers, or Friends ; where he continued in good standing with that people for a number of years, until the death of Elder Thombs, at which time, he was remarkably convinced, that it was his duty to return to his former brethren. And at an Elders' conference, which was holden at Gorham, Nov. 5th, A. D. 1806, he returned, and was kindly received by his brethren, who gave him again the right hand of fellowship, and welcomed him home to his Father's house, and restored him again to office. He is now living in Gorham, and is an useful brother.

Their next quarterly meeting was holden at Newgloucester, March 3, A. D. 1787. Dea. Andrew Cobb was chosen moderator, and Elder P. Tingley, clerk. After prayer, praise, &c. they received and read a very loving letter of salutation from the church at Gorham, which was refreshing to their souls. Then (as their manner was,) proceeded to the examination of members present, to see if they were in fellowship ; and found a general union. They then sent a weighty Epistle to all the churches, and congregations which were in union with them ; informing that they had an harmonious meeting ; that they enjoyed God's gracious presence, and felt sweet breathings of soul for Zion's prosperity, &c. and exhorted their brethren every where to have their loins girt about with truth, their lamps trimmed, and constantly burning, to be continually in the exercise of divine love, and to improve each fleeting moment for the glory of God, and good of saints and sinners ; to be

watchful against the devices of satan, and abstain from all appearance of evil ; and to evidence themselves to be children of the DAY, by watchfulness and sobriety ; and by putting on the breastplate of faith and love ; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. Also exhorting sinners, to instantly drop every weapon of rebellion ; give their hearts to Jesus ; let their eyes observe his ways ; to forsake all and follow the LAMB ; and thus become the heirs of eternal salvation. It appears by their writings that they were highly threatened, and somewhat expected a storm of persecution. They closed their epistle with the following words—"Dark clouds gather fast, very fast ; perhaps persecution unto death, is at hand. But wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your hearts ; be faithful unto death, and as much as in you lies live peaceably with all men, and the very God of love and peace be with, and bless you, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen."

Those men were frequently threatened, and sometimes some of them warned out of town ; and at other times mobs were raised to stop them from going through particular places ; but none of these things moved them, and their enemies were generally put to shame. Elder P. Tingley, at a certain time, went into a town to preach, and the people were so alarmed at his coming, that a warrant was immediately issued, and the constable ordered to warn him out of town ; but when the constable came to execute his office ; he felt in himself such a mixture of wrath and fear, together with the lashes of a guilty con-

science, that he had what might be justly termed a proper ague fit, and he shook so that he was unable to read his warrant : and after attempting it a number of times, and failing, the Elder took it and read it for him, and gave him the paper again ; but the man soon left him, and there is no doubt but the poor man was glad when he had gotten out of his presence.

Their next quarterly meeting was holden at New-Durham, June 2, 1787. Elder Benjamin Randel served as moderator, and Elder P. Tingley, clerk. And after receiving several letters of salutation, which brought some good accounts from their several branches, they entered upon business, examined the brethren present, found them in harmony, and agreed to go forward in communion. They adjourned business until the second day of the week. On the first day of the week they attended to public worship, and the administration of the Lord's supper, &c. On the second day of the week, it being the 4th day of June, they attended to business, and had much profitable conversation on matters relative to the glory of God, and good of souls. Then Robert Dickey, of Epsom, being present, related his experience, and desired to be baptized. After inquiring if the brethren present were satisfied with the experience of said Dickey, they repaired to the water and baptized him, and received him as a member of the church ; in doing of which, they had a very solemn, melting season—this Dickey, was a man favoured of God ; he had a beautiful gift of exhortation, and was instrumental in the hand, of God, of

the conversion of many souls. I think he is yet living. There were also a number of persons from Pittsfield, who attended this meeting, and were also received as members. Sept. 1, the same year, they held their quarterly meeting at Edgcomb, (Kennebeck.) Here they received letters and verbal reports which gave accounts of general union among the brethren, and of a great appearance of revivals in several places; this was a time of refreshing to the Elders and brethren. They thanked God and took courage. They had a very happy season on the first day of the week, in praise, prayer, preaching the word, breaking bread, &c. On the second day of the ensuing October (by a previous appointment) a number of Elders and brethren attended a meeting in the town of Gray, (Maine) examined and ordained Nathan Merrill of that town, to the work of the ministry. Elder Benj. Randel delivered a sermon suitable to the occasion, from Col. iii. 17, "Say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."—Merrill run well for a while.

Their next quarterly meeting was holden at Gorham, December 1st, the same year. The letters of salutation to this meeting brought accounts of some small additions in some places, and the churches expressed ardent longings for Zion's prosperity.

At this meeting they examined James Mc Corson, of Gorham, for the work of the ministry and on the 4th day of December, he was publicly ordained, and set apart to the work. Elder

D. Hibbard delivered a very weighty discourse, suitable to the occasion, from 1 Timothy iv. 16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

They closed the scene by administering the Lord's Supper, washing one another's feet, &c. A very great solemnity appeared on the minds of the spectators through the whole. Mc Corson, however, continued in the work of the Lord, and has been a useful brother. He has not travelled so much as some, though not wholly confined to parish lines; his gift appears to be that of a pastor, he has generally tarried by the stuff, but has shared in the spoil. He has had the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing his labours blessed in Gorham, Buxton, Standish, and in several other places where he has laboured. He is now living in Buxton; infirm in his body, afflicted with that distressing complaint called the Asthma; but he is strong in faith, giving glory to God, and when he can get a breath, he breathes it out for him. His hope appears to be as an anchor to his soul, both sure and steadfast. In the year 1788, on the first day of March, they assembled at Newgloucester, at the dwelling house of brother John Woodman, but nothing special took place. In June following they met at New-Durham. The letters of salutation to this meeting, brought reports of general coldness in several places; but that in others, there was a good degree of engagedness, in the cause of the blessed Redeemer. They had much profitable

conversation, with respect to the perfect consistency of the testimonies of the inspired penmen in the holy scriptures, concerning the salvation of believers, and damnation of unbelievers, the order of God's house, &c. They were sweetly agreed in their ideas with respect to these things, and before they parted commemorated the dying love of their blessed Jesus, by the administration of the Lord's supper, &c.

At their quarterly meeting which was holden at Edgcomb, September 6th, the same year, they received refreshing reports from several places; particularly from the towns of Bristol, Canaan, and Seguntcook, *viz.* that a number of souls were brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light; with a Macedonian cry to the meeting,—"Come over and help us." They accordingly sent them chosen brethren, *viz.* Elders Daniel Hibbard, B. Randel, brs. E. Brookings, R. Dickey & Daniel Dunton; who, when they came to Bristol, and saw the grace of God, they were glad, and being assembled at the house of Thomas Thompson in that town, after praise, prayer, &c. the brethren in Bristol related to them what the Lord had done for their souls; this being done to general satisfaction, the Elders gave them the right hands of fellowship, and considered them a branch of the church to which they belonged. Also at this same quarterly meeting, there were ten persons baptized and received as members; this was called a great addition in that day. Ten baptized in time of quarterly meeting! And (perhaps) ten or twelve more received as a

branch at Bristol ! They made more account of this, and praised God more for his wonderful works to the children of men, than we do now, when an hundred souls are brought out and baptized ; and yet, a soul is as precious now, as it was then ; and as happy if saved, and as miserable if damned.

This addition seemed to give the Elders and brethren a new spring. No doubt they thought that the time was at hand when Jesus would reign from land to land, from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The news of this addition spread ; the brethren all around, began to rise and shine ; sinners began to tremble ; hypocrites began to be afraid, and the power of the Lord began again to be manifested in their meetings.

At their next quarterly meeting, which was holden at Gorham, in December following, they had an heavenly season ; they received joyful tidings, *viz.* That the work of the Lord had revived in a wonderful manner in the towns of Parsonsfield, Francesborough (now called Cornish) Buxton, &c. Also at this meeting they received the following members, *viz.* Benj. Cobb, of Falmouth ; Jonathan Freeman, of Gorham ; Daniel Cobb, of Otisfield ; and Betsey Smith, of Standish. This was a time of thanksgiving, but they had sorrow to mingle with their joys ; for at this meeting they received the melancholy news of the death of their well beloved brother Deacon Gilman Lougee, of Parsonsfield, who departed this life, September 29th, 1788, being killed suddenly by the falling of a rock in a

clay-pit. This caused a time of mourning among them, he was a useful brother, and much respected. They closed their meeting with praise to God for the glorious revival of religion, and with prayer for the afflicted ; preaching the word, and administering the supper, &c.

March 7th, A. D. 1789, quarterly meeting was holden in Parsonsfield, for the first time. The brethren assembled at the dwelling house of Elder Saml. Weeks. They began with public worship. Elder Weeks preached a sermon, from 1 Kings, xviii. 41. The day following, the meeting was holden at Amos Blazo's. Elder Benj. Randel preached in the morning, from Philip. ii. 12, 13. In the afternoon, from John iii. 3 ; and in the evening from Matt. ii. 2. Also a sermon was delivered by Elder James McCorson, from Job xxii. 21. This seemed to be a seed time, and although it is likely that some received it by the way side, some on stony places, and others among thorns ; yet it is to be hoped, that some received it into good and honest hearts, and have brought forth fruit with patience. In this meeting, a number of sinners were alarmed, and mourned for their sins ; faints were comforted, and praised God. The next day, being the 9th of March, they attended a meeting of business at the house of John Fose. They received reports from the various branches, that love and union prevailed among them, and a blessed revival of religion in several places. In the evening, they sat for worship :—Elder Randel preached from Eph. iv. 30. A very marvellous display of God's power followed the

word ; a number of sinners were cut down, and mourned for their sins ; others crying out, and saying, " what shall I do to be saved ?" the power of God was present to heal. Saints rejoiced and praised the Lord for the out pouring of his Spirit, and gathering in of souls. March 10, Elder Randel preached from Heb. x. 33, (a very weighty discourse.) This was followed by several pithy exhortations ; the power of God was wonderfully displayed. Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of bread. This was a time to be remembered by many.

June 6th, the same year, they assembled at New-Durham, and on the 5th of the ensuing September, they met at Edgcomb ; but nothing extraordinary took place. The churches were generally in union among themselves. They had a good season in their quarterly meeting, in praying, praising, preaching, doing business, &c. &c. The ministers travelled from place to place, preaching the gospel, and breaking bread to their brethren, and exhorting them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free ; and calling on sinners to repent, and believe the gospel. But there was but little visible addition for some time. Their principal business in the churches was to set things in order, and to cleanse the house ; but a time of trials drew nigh, and the ministers began to weep (as were) between the porch and the altar, saying, spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach."

It has generally been the case when there has been a reformation, or revival of religion

among this people, or under the improvement of those preachers, that some preachers of other denominations would be fawning round; and say but little or nothing about their party principles until the reformation was principally over; but as soon as the young brethren got to be low in their minds, they would begin to insil their party principles into them, and this generally produced a time of trials, by making a division among the converts; and in this way Christ has been often wounded in the house of his friends.

November 7th, 1788, the quarterly meeting was holden at Gorham, at Deacon Andrew Cobb's. A goodly number attended. Elder Randel served as moderator, and Elder P. Tingley, clerk. By the reports, it appears that a number of churches were well engaged; but others were luke warm, and had fallen into contention about principles. What these principles were, I am not able to ascertain, because the record is silent about them; but I dare say, that they were not the principles of the doctrine of Christ; *viz.* repentance from dead works, faith toward God, &c; for when people get into a luke warm state, it is seldom the case that they say much about these principles. These are very much neglected if not totally forgotten by them; but they frequently fall to disputing about those principles and doctrines, which the Bible is altogether silent about, and such as they themselves are altogether ignorant of: when men attend to the principles of the doctrine of Christ, there is no room for dispute. These things are written and

made so plain, in the scriptures of truth, that a child may understand them ; i. e. a child who has experienced the religion of Jesus Christ ; for the scriptures being written by the Spirit of God, they exactly agree with the experience of every heaven born soul. So that when a child of God reads the bible, he reads his own experience ; and besides, when persons are engaged in that religion which is pure and undefiled, they feel such a love to God, and to their fellow creatures, that they have no disposition to dispute. But when men suffer their imagination to go beyond the bounds of revelation, there is room enough for dispute. One says, lo here is Christ ! - another, lo there is Christ ! and another says lo he is in the desert ! and all remote from the tenor of the scriptures. The fact is, when people, through unwatchfulness, and unprayerfulness, lose the life and power of religion, they feel restless, and want to find something to satisfy their minds ; and being lost to the principles of the doctrine of Christ, they have recourse to those divers and strange doctrines, and endeavour to furnish themselves with a set of principles, that will appease their consciences ; excuse them from religious duties ; cover them up in their sins ; and shield them from the labours of the church. Therefore the first thing you will hear from such professors is, they have changed their sentiments. Ah ! what do they believe now ? Oh ! one believes that what is to be, will be, and if he is to be saved, he shall be ; and that God, for his own glory, hath foreordained whatsoever cometh to pass. Another believes, that

if he ever was converted, he shall never be lost, let him do what he will;—that he may fall foully, but cannot fall finally. A third believes, that God will certainly save every body, let them do as they please, and live as they list;—that they are all predestinated for eternal glory; that there is no such thing as everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, eternal damnation, a hell where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; that these are only figurative expressions, and do not mean as they say; but if the bible does not mean as it says in one thing, then it does not mean as it says in another; and if the bible does not mean what it says, then there is not a man upon earth that knows what it means. The truth is, the bible was translated out of the original Hebrew and Greek, by a number of learned men, who were (I dare say) as well acquainted with those ancient languages, and a great deal better, than any of our modern criticks, who complain and find so much fault with the translation. They translated the bible into plain English, making use of such words as were in common use among the English, and easy to be understood. So that all the assistance we need now to understand the bible, is only the Spirit of God, by which it was written, and a good English dictionary.

Those divers and strange doctrines, cannot be propagated in the time of reformation, or where people are engaged in the life and power of religion;—then the principles of the doctrine of Christ come in fashion.—“Repentance from dead works; faith toward God; the doctrine

of baptisms, and laying on of hands ; and of the resurrection of the dead ; and of eternal judgment," is all the theme. There is nothing said then about " what is to be will be," nor " if I am to be saved, I shall be ;" or that there is no hell ; no everlasting punishment, or eternal damnation, &c. But the sinner then, by the Spirit of God, sees himself in danger of eternal damnation, and sees himself going to hell, and all his cry is, God be merciful to me a sinner ! God be merciful to me a sinner ! and as soon as his soul is set at liberty, he is for going on to perfection ; and pressing toward the mark for the prize, &c. There all the dispute ends.

The whore of Babylon, can never introduce her doctrines, till after the sun goes down. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night, Prov. vii. 9, then she gets them into her bed, and there she lulls them to sleep, under the notion that the good man of the house has gone a long journey ; has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the time appointed, &c. &c.

At this November meeting, they received and read a very weighty letter from the church in New Durham, containing a number of important sayings ; and one in particular, in the following words : " Humility is the first step we take toward heaven ; humility is the second ; humility is the third ; and there is not a step we go in the heavenly way, but what humility attends. And when we arrive to the mansions of immortal glory, we shall feel the greatest degree of humility, and be eternally clothed with

humility." If professors would always keep humble, they would avoid a great many difficulties.

Feb. 8th, A. D. 1790, they held a quarterly meeting at Parsonsfield; travelling being difficult, there was but a few attended. Elder Samuel Weeks, served as moderator, and Elder P. Tingley, clerk. The churches in general were said to be in a low state, though there were a few churches well engaged. They had a comfortable meeting, but nothing extraordinary took place. June 5th, they attended their quarterly meeting at New-Durham. There remained the same complaint of coldness and declension in several places; but in some other places the brethren began to rise, and to be engaged in the cause of God, and there was an appearance of a revival. The people, I expect, began to be tired of disputing, and hearing disputes about those unscriptural, controverted points, and began to be concerned for the salvation of souls, the glory of God, &c.

On the 4th of the ensuing September, they assembled at Edgcomb. This meeting continued four days. They had much consolation in praise, prayer, preaching the word, &c. The brethren in Georgetown being taxed to a minister of what was called the standing order, and the people of *his* parish, refusing to refund the money according to the provisionary law of the state in that case, the brethren propounded the question to this meeting, whether it was best to stand them a lawsuit? Ans. If they will venture the curse in keeping it, we will resign it, and take the bless-

flag of oppression for Christ's sake. It is better to suffer wrong, than to do wrong.

Nov. 6, 1790, they assembled at Gorham, at Deacon Andrew Cobb's. Elder Randel served as moderator, Elder P. Tingley, clerk. At this meeting they received a good report from several places, *viz.* that there were some awakenings, and an appearance of revivals; but quite the reverse in others; i. e. that there were discords and schisms.—They were much disturbed in this meeting by a number of heady, high minded, selfconceited professors; who came into their meeting and disturbed them by publickly contradicting and opposing them, both in the time of worship, and business; but they suffered these things with patience; and the Lord owned and blessed them in a marvellous manner. The power of God was wonderfully manifested through the whole meeting. At this meeting, they had much conversation respecting the improvement of John Cotten. This Cotten had an excellent gift of exhortation; but it may be said of him, as it was of Elias, "he was a man subject to like passions as we are." And sometimes his zeal for God, carried him to a great length, and exposed him to great persecutions. He travelled a great deal, and warned the people night and day with tears, in meeting houses, private houses, and sometimes in the streets. He was often pushed about and smitten by the people, sometimes stoned; and I have been informed by those who were acquainted with the circumstances, once if no more, dragged out of a meeting-house by the heels, and dragged some distance

from the house in the street, in the same manner. All this, only for speaking a few words for God, by way of exhortation to the people; and warning them to repent, and believe the gospel. I believe there was no person, who was intimately acquainted with Cotten, that could rationally doubt of his being a true servant of Jesus Christ: for even when in their merciless hands, he often prayed to the Almighty to forgive their sins, and grant them repentance. Yet I have understood that they persecuted him, and abused him, in a shameful manner, in a number of places. He then lived in Gorham. Afterwards, removed into the town of Cornish, and there, after suffering a while, he finished his course, closed his eyes in death, and is now, doubtless, clothed in white, and crowned with glory, and being dead, he yet speaketh. Thousands have heard his warning voice, and as a friend, I would advise every one who are yet living, that have had any hand in persecuting him or any other child of God, to repent of their sins and sue for a pardon. For "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Feb. 5th, A. D. 1791, they assembled at Parsonsfield for quarterly meeting; had a comfortable season in worship, and had much profitable conversation, and enjoyed consolation therein; but it appeared by the reports, that the churches remained in a low state in general. From the year 1785, to the year 1791, there was comparatively but a little visible addition to this church or people. Although the ministers were labo-

tious, and travelled almost all their time, and kept up their meetings ; yet being few in number, and the distance they travelled so great, and their opposers so many, who were frequently following them round from place to place, and representing them as an hurtful set of men, that they seemed to gain but little for several years ; notwithstanding, God often blessed their labours, and souls were frequently convicted and converted under their improvement. Yet many of those who were converted were even afraid to join them, on account of their being represented, by their opposers, in such false colours. These travelling opposers have always had a sly way of getting along. They generally fall in with the work, and own the reformation, and try to proselyte the converts ; but degrade the preachers who were the instruments of their conversion. These men deny the doctrine of eternal, particular, unconditional election, and the doctrine of original sin ! says one. They have no foundation, nor articles of faith, but the bible ! says another. They deny the final perseverance of the saints, and hold that men can save themselves ! says another. These men deny infant sprinkling, and go about breaking up churches ! says another. All these men go about for, is only to get their living ! says another.—Thus these men have been represented, by men of other denominations. As to their denying the doctrine of eternal, particular, unconditional election, and that of original sin, that is true ; and the reason why they deny them, is because there are no such doctrines mentioned

in the bible. That they hold to no articles of faith but the bible, that is true ; and the reason of their holding the bible as their only rule of faith and practice, is because they do not believe that there is any man, or number of men that can write a book so good as the bible. That they deny the perseverance of the saints, and hold that they can save themselves, that is not true. As to the perseverance of saints, these people hold strongly to that ; i. e. they hold to persevering in the way of the Lord ; to travelling on, and making progress in the divine life. They do not hold to sitting down in sloth, and trusting in past experience, and call it perseverance : they call that presumption. As to saying that they can save themselves, I know that is not true ; for they believe that themselves, and every body else, who are saved, are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. But they do not believe, if they are damned, that it will be because they were reprobated from all eternity, but because they believe not on Jesus Christ, and refuse that grace which alone is able to save them, when it is freely offered to them.

That they deny infant sprinkling, is true ; and they deny it for the same reason that they deny the doctrine of original sin, &c. ; i. e. because there is no such thing mentioned in the bible. That these men go about breaking up churches, I believe it never was their intention to break up any good churches, or to make any disturbance in any good societies. I know there have been a great many churches, towns, and so-

cieties divided, where these ministers have travelled ; and ministers have been the instruments of making these divisions ; yet not these travelling ministers, but the town ministers make the divisions, by opposing the work of God. For when one of these travelling ministers goes into a town under the influence of the Spirit of God, and preaches Christ's gospel ; it is commonly the case, that sinners are awakened, and begin to cry for mercy, and to seek the Lord. If the town minister is an unconverted man, and is teaching for hire, and divining for money, he begins to think that his craft is in danger. He therefore begins to fight the work, calls it delusion, wild fire, and every thing but what it is. And degrading the preacher, calls him a wolf, and a deceiver ; and says that he preaches false doctrine, and is a fool, and a lazy fellow, and ought not to be suffered to go about preaching. The people hearing these things, perceive immediately that their minister is not a friend to religion, nor to them ; and that if he can only get their money, he does not care what becomes of their souls. They then leave him ; or rather sometimes it is the case, that he even drives them away, and then lays the blame to these travelling preachers. But the fact is, if the town minister is a converted man, and will turn out with his people to hear those travelling ministers, and join in the work, and encourage the reformation, and feed the sheep and lambs, and tell the preacher as I was once told by a congregational minister, after delivering a sermon in his desk, " May God bless you, brother, and re-

ward you for your labors of love, with a good crop of souls ;" then there would be no divisions ; we should all be happy together. The difference of opinion in circumstantial matters, would soon be all done away ; and the watchmen would see eye to eye, and lift up their voice together, and with the voice sing. This would be a happy day, and a day of rejoicing to millions of souls.

As to their going about to get their living, it is pretty certain that they get a living, or else they would not be able to go about ; and I dare say, that there are none of these brawling preachers poorer than their blessed Master was, who had not where to lay his head ; and a living man has no reason to complain.

The number of ordained ministers belonging to this church, in the year 1790, was only eight ; licensed preachers only ten ; the whole number of brethren, male and female, in all the branches, according to the best account that I can get, was no more than four hundred. This was said to be the most dark and trying time, that ever these people experienced. The year 1791, was a year of release to many souls. In the month of April, on the first Sabbath after the yearly fast, the author of this Magazine, preached his first sermon, to a crowded assembly, in the town of Middleton, (N. H.) from Psalm cxviii. 8, 9, " It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man : it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes." This was a strange thing indeed, in the town of Middleton. Some said one thing, and some said an-

other ; some laughed, and some cried ; some submitted themselves to God, and others fought like bears. Some said, he is a good man ; others said, nay, but he deceiveth the people. Some said he preached the gospel ; others said he preached false doctrine. Some said he ought to be encouraged ; others, that he ought to be burned at the stake, as old John Rogers was. Some said he should go into the meeting house ; others threatened, if he did, they would tear it down. The whole town seemed to be in an uproar, and the noise was heard afar off. People came from a great distance to see and hear this new preacher, and to satisfy themselves with respect to this new doctrine. It was not an uncommon thing, to see people to meeting from twenty miles' distance ; and the people of almost every denomination, who were then acquainted with him, gave him a new name. People of no religion, called him a christian ; the people of the congregational persuasion, called him a separate, a newlight, &c. The calvinist baptists, called him a freewiller, a general provisoner ; others called him a quaker, &c. &c. But the meetings were kept up, and the reformation spread, and in a short time, eight men were brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. These eight assembled together (without any counsel or assistance of any denomination ;) and, after solemn prayer to Almighty God, for wisdom and understanding, entered into a solemn verbal agreement, to consider themselves a church of Christ ; and take the scriptures of truth, to be their only rule of faith and practice ;

and to believe, preach, practise, and deal with each other as they direct. They then agreed to meet together on the first Wednesday in every month, for religious conference, to know each others' minds, and to keep up their union, and to do such business among themselves as they found needful to be done. God blessed those meetings in a wonderful manner. They were held open, and free for any person who was desirous to see and hear ; and very large congregations of people attended. Some may ask, whether it was proper to do their business in open meetings. I think it was, very proper, to do such business as they had to do ; for they lived so near the Lord in that day, that they had no business to do, only to relate the travel of their minds, and exhort the spectators to "Come, taste and see, that the Lord is good." In the course of about three months, about forty people in that, and the adjacent places, chiefly husbands and wives, united together in the love of God, and in the praises of Jesus Christ. They often sung or repeated these lines :

———"Hell trembles, heaven rejoices,
Lift up your heads, ye saints, with cheerful voices."

There had been none of them baptized ; but about this time, John Buzzell saw his way clear to be baptized. The ordinance was administered by Elder Benjamin Randel ; all the rest have been baptized since, and the whole considered those in connection with the church of Christ at New-Durham. Many more were baptized the same year ; and the work of the Lord began to

spread in a marvellous manner, in New-Durham, Barrington, Pittsfield, and some in Wolfborough, and Brookfield, (N. H.) The preachers engaged in this work, were Elder Benj. Randel, Elder Joseph Eoddy, sen. David Knowlton, Isaac Townsend, and John Buzzell ; and a great many exhorters, both male and female. A very glorious work took place the same year, in Kittery, under the improvement of Elder John Whitney. A large number were converted, and baptized there. Also, in the town of Waterborough, a large number were converted ; but a division took place in that town, and has ever remained till now ; but we hope that the time is not far off, when all such divisions will be done away, and the people of God be all united in love.

(To be continued)

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

An Account of late Reformations and Revivals of Religion.

IT will doubtless be remembered by my readers, that in my former number, I mentioned a reformation, which had then already begun, in the town of Limington and Limerick ; and promised to give a more particular account of it in this. This reformation began about the first of October last, principally under the improve-

ment of a young man by the name of Jeremiah Bullock, of Royalston, county of Worcester. This young man came to this place, about the time the reformation began, and has been very constantly preaching in those towns ever since; and the work has been progressively increasing and spreading under his labors. Some of all ranks, and some of almost every denomination, in those places, have been hopefully converted. It began on the southerly part of Limington, adjoining the town of Limerick; and spread in both towns. Meetings of worship were attended almost every day, and the congregation increased from meeting to meeting. About the 3d Sabbath after the reformation broke out in this powerful manner, the congregation was so large, that the people were obliged to leave the house, and go into the field. Some hundreds of people attended this meeting, and the power of God was wonderfully displayed. Sinners cried aloud for mercy, and were brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. Saints rejoiced in the Lord, and praised him for his wonderful works to the children of men. Although the opposition was great, it did not appear to hinder the work, but rather to increase it. The preacher, seeing the opposition, and esteeming souls so precious, time so short, eternity so nigh, and a genuine reformation so essential to the happiness of mankind, both here and hereafter, that he lifted up his voice like a trumpet, and warned the people to flee from the wrath to come. Many were cut down under the preaching, and began to sue for a pardon of their sins. This

waked a number of the old saints ; and every one who had oil in their vessels, went out to meet the bridegroom. Every one then found something to do for God ; some exhorting, some praying, some praising ; others conversing with those in distress. It may be said of them, as it was said in the days of Nehemiah, "the people had a mind to work."

*Such wonderful love awakes the lip,
Of saints, who were almost asleep ;
To speak the praises of thy name,
And make our cold affections flame.*

The preacher said, that they were like a camomile bed ; the more they were trodden upon, the wider they spread. And indeed this seemed to be the case ; for the more the wind of opposition blew, the higher the flame of reformation arose, and the hotter it burned. And many of those, who were opposed to the reformation at the beginning, have since become some of its greatest advocates. There is one thing that appears strange, to some formal professors, in these reformations, and they often bring it as an objection against the work. That is this, that some of the most vile and wicked persons in the town, will often be the very first that will fall in with the work, and profess to be convicted and converted. While others, who appear to be of a much more steady and reserved life, and it may be church members too, will even fight against the reformation. And sometimes it may be the case, that even the minister himself, may be opposed to the work, and call it

heresy, delusion, wild fire, the work of the devil, &c. This is a mystery, however, that may be easily explained to an unprejudiced mind. 1. Because there can be no greater evidence that the work is really of God, than this, viz. that bad people are made better, wicked people made righteous, the ungodly made godly, &c. This shews plainly that the work is good. As to their being the first that are converted, this may be easily accounted for, from Christ's own words:—"They that are whole, have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And Jesus Christ thought no disgrace to him, to tell the scribes and pharisees, plainly, "the publicans and harlots, go into the kingdom of God before you."

When persons go to meeting, dressed up in a garment of tradition, patched with broad philacteries, and a shield of false doctrine over that, and a heart full of self righteousness, hardened with unbelief, and a disposition to oppose the work of God; it can hardly be expected that they can reap any real benefit by hearing the word; or that ever such persons should be converted, unless they should, like Saul, be met in the way, and a light shine around them, exceeding the brightness of the day; and they hear a voice in their own tongue, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Such people as these, though they profess the christian religion; yet they are the greatest opposers and persecutors of those, who are truly righteous. This is a character that is generally tacked upon the clergy. But I fear

that there are persons of this description to be found in every denomination, as well as among the clergy ; only some are more covered up, and have a sly way of opposing and persecuting the servants of Christ. They will not dare to come out so bold, and openly declare that the work is altogether heresy and delusion ; but will acknowledge it in part to be good, but that there is a great deal of bad among it ; at least that the preacher is a bad man, or talks too much, or too loud, or is too zealous, and makes too much noise, or has got some corrupt principle, or does not know quite so much as they do, or something or other. But at the same time, if they can proselyte the converts, and persuade them to join with them, then they are fine christians, notwithstanding they were converted under the preaching of such erroneous ministers. The fact is, let a man belong to what denomination he will, if he opposes the work of God, or ministers of Christ, he is a bad man, and is not fit to be a teacher. For every truly good man, let his particular persuasion be what it may, will rejoice to see a sinner repent, a prodigal return, a soul converted, a bad man made better, the wicked made righteous, the ungodly made godly, &c. This is a general good. Where a sinner truly repents and believes the gospel, he is not only happy in himself, but his family and neighbors feel the benefit of his reformation. This glorious work is still going on, notwithstanding the opposition it has met with. It is now spreading marvellously in almost every part of Limington, and considerably in the towns of Limerick and Cornish,

and in several other places. I am informed by Brother Bullock, that about one hundred and eighty souls, have been converted, within the compass of his travel, since this reformation began. Several preachers have visited them, and assisted them, since this work has been going on. Eleven were baptized by John Buzzell, on the 14th of December; six more on the 13th of March; and three on the 23th of March. Several others have been baptized by other ministers. Many more are only waiting for an opportunity. Brother Bullock appears to be determined to spend and be spent. He closed his account with the following lines:

*My body is of little worth;
I am determin'd to go forth,
To spend, be spent for my dear Lord,
While lungs and life he will afford.
Although I'm poor, and but a worm,
Yet through God's grace, I'll face the storm.
Lord, give me grace, to keep me low,
And I the gospel trump will blow.*

The reformation still continues to go on in Parsonsfield and Effingham. Several have of late experienced religion, for the first time; and there is an appearance of a revival, especially in the upper part of Effingham. The brethren in that town, though young, appear to be well engaged in religion. They keep up their meetings of worship and conference, and find wisdom's ways to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths to be paths of peace.

There is also a very glorious revival of religion, in the towns of Sandwich and Tamworth.

A large number have been converted and baptized in those towns within twelve months past, and the work is still going on. There are several ministers engaged in the work, and appear to be clothed with salvation; viz. two Elder Quimby's, Elder J. Colby, and Elder Bean, and several other brethren and sisters, who really labor in the gospel. Souls are daily convicted and converted.

*The wilderness doth sweetly ring,
With prayer and praises to the King,
Who sits on Zion's hill;
The towns and cities bear the voice,
The sinners mourn, the saints rejoice;
With praise the streets are fill'd.*

I am informed, that God has once more smiled on his heritage in the town of New-Durham, (N. H.); and a number of souls have been converted in that place, under the improvement of Elder Cheney, who now supplies the place of our well beloved departed Brother, Benjamin Randel. I have only had a sketch of this work, and cannot give so particular an account of it as I should be glad to do; but will endeavor to do it in the next Number, if I should be favored with the particulars.

I have also been informed, that several brethren and friends, who have been somewhat acquainted with the circumstances, that God has poured out his Spirit, on a large number of the inhabitants in the town of Canterbury, (N. H.) I understand that many have been powerfully converted in that place, within a few months past; and a large number have been baptized.

I was favoured with the pleasure of reading a letter from a young physician, who lives in that town, to his parents, who live in the town of Limerick ; dated, I think, sometime last November ; in which I read the following words, and wish I may be excused for using the freedom, (with consent of his friends) to make them public.

“ I trust I have experienced that peace of mind, for several weeks past, which the world, with all its riches and honors, can neither give, nor take away. The God of heaven has, (I humbly hope) had mercy on my soul, and plucked me as a brand from the burning, saved me from the jaws of death, and a gaping hell, set my feet upon the Rock Christ Jesus, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to the God of heaven. I have bid adieu to worldly enjoyments, and count them but dung and dross, for Christ's sake. I have turned my back upon the world, followed the example of my blessed Master, resigned my body to the watery grave, and have been planted with him in baptism ; and am determined, through grace, to press my passage on to the realms of immortal glory. And if I am faithful, I trust I shall, ere long, range the wide domain of my God, and sing the praises of the Lamb, forever and ever. God grant it may be the case, not only with me, but with my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and the whole Israel of God. Amen. J. M. H.”

There has been a very great display of the power of God, in the town of Lebanon, (Me.) within two years past. Many souls have been

brought to the knowledge of the truth, and to espouse the cause of the blessed Redeemer ; and the work has extended into the towns of Shapley and Sandford. I received a line from a brother in the ministry, dated at Shapley, Jan. 14th, 1811, which contained the following information.

“ I would just remark, that the brethren in this place, have of late taken a new resolution to forsake all, and follow the Lord, fully. God is blessing us with his rich grace, and wonderfully shewing his ability and willingness to save, to the utmost, all who come to him. In the town of Sandford, many souls have experienced salvation, and the work is still going on in a powerful manner, which causeth my heart to rejoice in the Lord. I have baptized fifteen members. I find that much faithful labour is wanting in Sandford, and other places adjacent. My prayer to God, is, that you may have a good quarterly meeting. From your brother in Christ.
H. GOODWIN.”

There has been a blessed revival of religion, in a number of towns in the state of Vermont ; particularly in the towns of Tunbridge, Strafford, Vershire, Corinth, Northfield, Woodstock, &c. God has poured out his Spirit, on many souls, in these places, and turned them from darkness to light, and from the service of sin and Satan, to the service of the living and true God. Forty-five persons, have been baptized by Elder Nathaniel King, who lives in Tunbridge, in the course of the last year ; and

eighty, by Elder Aaron Buzzell, who resides in Strafford. In the month of February, I attended a yearly meeting in Tunbridge. A very large company of brethren and sisters attended, and a great many candid spectators. The ministers spake with life and power. The saints appeared to be very happy, and full of love, and the spectators behaved with great decency. On the Sabbath, I attended a meeting at Strafford, a very large congregation were present to hear the word, and conducted in a most beautiful manner. There was then a very great prospect of an increase of the work of the Lord, in that place. The number of converts are daily increasing in that part of the country. Hundreds of people flock to the meetings to hear God's word preached, and to see his ordinances administered, and behave themselves in the most orderly manner.

It is highly pleasing to a candid mind, to see a country so lately an howling wilderness, turned into fruitful fields; and so lately inhabited by savages dwelling in camps and wigwams, now inhabited by enlightened christians, dwelling in elegant structures, surrounded with the comforts of life, with convenient houses erected for the public worship of God, and the people flocking from every direction, and crowding those houses, and listening to hear the salubrious sound of the gospel, from the mouths of the ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

ERRATUM.

On the 60th page, 13th line, from the top, for *brauling*, read *travelling*.

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